Novelized by Thompson Buchanan From the

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By WINCHELL SMITH, FREDERIC

THOMPSON and PAUL ARMSTRONG

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"It's Smith, sir," he said to the gen-COR. WATER & UNION STS. eral manager. "He's leaving that gun too long in the furnace. I kicked, and he hit me when my back was turned. THE PEOPLE'S DAIRY I'll fix him."

Pinckney looked at the bloody man 30c-BUTTER-30c FRESH FROM THE CHURN

"You ought to have more sense than to kick," he said, "Smith's in charge of that job. He's responsible. It's none of your business. You ought to have kept your head shut,"

(Continued.) "Marsh will take care of me," gasped

O'Leary. "Hurry! Do as I told you."

Reluctantly Lucy ran out of the office

as the head draughtsman came over

The assistant foreman was almost too

weak from the shock and loss of blood

to reply, but he managed to gasp out

"Smith cracked me with a hammer

when I wasn't looking. He's fighting

drunk, Mr. Marsh, and ruining the

Marsh, experienced about the works.

was examining O'Leary's wounded

head with almost professional skill.

"What's happened, O'Leary?"

to the injured man.

Sommers gun."

across an office table.

O'Leary stared at the manager, too amazed to retort. He was still half dazed from the terrific blow he had received or his suspicions would have been immediately aroused. The two stood ready. They knew just what to do.

a little lower in price than the ordinary, age. We have special bargains in soiled bags and cases which will afford you an additional saving if you call quickly. "Here," ordered Pinckney, "take thi fellow across to the doctor quick. Tell him it's a works case." The two men selzed O'Leary, picked

him up in their arms and hurrled with him out of the office. Marsh turned to the general mana-

"We've got to stop this, Mr. Pinckney," he exclaimed. "Smith is fight-

ing drunk." Pinckney nodded carelessly. "Oh, yes, I understand, but I'll se to Smith. There's something more im-

portant on now. I've just got a wire from my agent in Washington." "About my gun?" asked Marsh anx tously.

"About the Rhinestrom gun," came Pinckney's cold correction. The head draughtsman nodded ac quiescence.

"Yes, that's what I mean," he agreed.

"Well, there's all sorts of trouble in Washington," he explained. "Tomorrow they'll notify us not to begin on the Rhinestrom order until the Som-

mers gun is tested." "What of that?" asked Marsh blankly. "It only means a slight delay."

Pinckney made an impatient gesture. "Slight delay, nothing! Haven't you sense enough to see it's a game of this toy sailor, Sommers? They'll countermand the order for our gun after they test his just as sure as fate." Marsh dropped into a chair deject-

"Just my luck!" he exclaimed in distress. "That's the end of my royalty. I might have known. It always hap-

pens that way with me. I never have any luck." Pinckney stood looking, a sneering

smile on his face.

"That's it," he said contemptuously. "Lay down. That's the reason your luck is always bad and always will be bad. A quitter can't have any luck. How do you expect to have anything if you drop at the first ditch?"

The inventor looked up, puzzled. "What can I do?" he asked.

Pinckney smiled pityingly on him. What can you do? Haven't you sense enough to guess? Here"-he stepped closer to the inventor to speak in a lower, firmer tone-"this dirty, tricky sailor has got the best of us in Washington, but with Smith drunk I guess we've got the best of him here." Marsh looked up, startled, amazed. Some slight hint of what Pinckney intended began to dawn on him.

Sprague Ice & Coal Co "What do you mean?" he asked slowly in an almost dazed tone. The general manager looked at him

> would get here?" "One-thirty," replied Marsh. Pinckney's laugh was rich with con

"What time did you say Sommers

fident relief. "Well, there's lots of time. It isn't 12 yet," he chuckled.

On Marsh's face had come an expression of horror. He knew now what the general manager intended to do. It made him sick to think of it, for Marsh was honest at heart. Only he was an inventor. He loved his work. It was his chance of a lifetime. And, then, be was weak.

"You mean you will ruin his gun?" he half whispered faintly. The brutal laugh of the other man

was answer enough. "Shut up!" he sneered. "Don't talk as if it was murder. If you're going to get on in this world, Marsh, you must learn there's as much in blocking the other fellow's game as there is in playing your own."

His latent sense of honesty made one last sickening revolt as Marsh started up from his chair, exclaiming

"It's awful! I won't be a party to any such thing as that, Mr. Pinckney." With all his superior physical and get what O'Leary got. That's what'll

not."

be coming to him. Pinckney shook his head. "No, that won't do, Smith," he com-

manded sharply. Out in the works where he was practically boss the foreman could not

be so easily controlled. "Oh, it won't do, won't it?" he yell-

ed. "I'll show you whether it'll do or

He doubled up one of his big fists, shaking it menacingly. And now Pinckney let him rage without check. A daring idea had come to the desperate schemer. Perhaps, after all, if Smith attacked Sommers it might not be so bad. It would be up to Smith. He would suffer; no one else. At apy rate. Sommers must not see that gun go into the tempering bath. Pinckney decided to irritate his drunken fore

ington it means an independent forman a little more. "Better be careful, Smith. He's in tune for you. Don't you know that?" position to make trouble for us all. The force of the other stronger per sonality reacted on the weaker man. He's an officer of the navy, you know; has a right to inspect the work. We've got to treat him well. Besides, this Pinckney went on more earnestly driving his points home with all the Sommers is a pretty bad fighter himself. He's got an idea he can lick anybody around these works." "Think what it means, Marsh. It

That was enough. Smith's fury was keyed to the fighting stage now. It only needed the presence of Sommers and a little provocation to start real

"Think's he's a fighter, does he?" he

roared. "Let him come in here-I'll show him who's a fighter. I don't have to treat him well. I don't have to treat you well, Pinckney. I don't have to treat anybody well. I'm independent, I am. I don't crawl for nobody."

"Smith, you're drunk," declared the general manager, . "You're drunk or you wouldn't talk that way."

"I know I'm drunk," roared the foreman. "But I'm the best man in the outfit, drunk or sober. Just let that navy duck show up." Inside Pinckney was smiling, well pleased, but he kept a straight, stern

"I know you're the best man, Smith," he confessed. "But why do you want to fight with me?"

"Who's fighting with you?" blustered the bully. "There wouldn't be enough of you to carry away if I was fighting with you." Pinckney laughed powerfully.

"All right," he said. "Now, remember, Sommers must not see that gun come out of the furnace. He's sore on us, and he'll make a bad report on the job if he gets a chance. You know what would happen to you then."

"He tried to get my job," roared the foreman. "Try to take an honest man's living away from him? I'll

He turned to the workman near the furnace, yelling, "Here, take that Som-Pinckney caught the foreman by the

"Wait a minute: wait, Smith," he commanded. "Here's Sommers now." The naval lieutenant was coming

down the long furnace room, shielding his eyes from the terrific heat and Smith lurched out to meet him just as he stopped in front of the furnace which held the Sommers gun. One quick look assured the navy man of

the foreman's condition. "How soon do you take the gun out, Smith?" he asked.

The foreman lurched up, thrusting his face close to the officer's. "None of your business," he retorted. "I take it out when I get good

and ready. Maybe at one time, and then again it may be another." The answer was enough. Every muscle in Sommers' powerful frame set for action. Already he had the

foreman's protruding jaw measured for his right hand, and Pinckney's voice checked him. "I say, Sommers, come here, please,

will you?" The naval man turned without a word and walked over to the general

manager. "Perhaps you can explain this, Mr. Pinckney?" he demanded sternly.

Pinckney smiled apologetically. "I hope you won't mind Smith. You can see be's been drinking."

The officer's eyes narrowed. fighting look was still on his face. "And that's the kind of a man you

allow to be in charge of important work?" he demanded. Pinckney was still apologetic.

"It doesn't often happen, I'm glad to say," he explained. "But Smith is a



"I don't have to treat anybody well. I'm independent.

very valuable man, one of the best I've ever known. I'd hate to lose him. He is thoroughly competent, even though he seems drunk. Liquor only makes him quarrelsome and impertinent. It doesn't affect his ability as a workman.

"He was just the man for this job. That's why I put him in charge and let him stay on even though drunk. You can depend on it, he'll do the work all right."

Sommers accepted the explanation with a sbrug.



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month at wholesale and must soon advance at retail.

"You've got a bad rap, boy. We must rush you to the doctor." your one chance, Marsh, to amount to trouble. something in this world and"-he end-He stepped to the door leading into ed most persuasively-"and you don't the works and yelled for two men, need to have anything to do with this then came back to do what he could. affair. I'll attend to it." Pinckney had almost at the same mo-The little man looked up with the ment returned from his private office. gaze of a helpless child. "What's this?" he exclaimed as he "What-what do you intend to do?" saw the bloody O'Leary half lying he asked.

"Don't be a fool, Marsh," he explain

ed, shaking his shoulder flercely, "You

know if we get this order from Wash-

"Yes, sir; you say so," he said,

neans the end of this slavery, day aft-

er day, at the works. It means you'll

have time to work on your inventions.

It's your one chance of a lifetime-

power of his strong will.

Pinckney smiled, well satisfied. The workman, injured though be "Do?" he said. "Nothing. I won't was, still held to his grim determinado anything." His look became shrewdtion to get justice for Sommers. At ly, terribly malevolent as he ended Pinckney's question he half raised himself on the table. Smith will put that gun in the tempering bath before Sommers gets

here." The little man's eyes grew wide with fearful understanding. "Put it in at too high a temperature

Pinckney laughed cruelly. "Smith has charge of that. If he kills the gun we don't know anything about it," be said.

The little man shivered. "This is horrible!"

and kill it!" be gasped.

Pinckney's laugh was cold and men "Horrible," he speered. "What did you invent your gun for but to murder men and disrupt nations? Now men had entered from the works and nobody asked you to do anything. Marsh. Just you go out there and

send Smith in to me. Attend to your work and don't notice anything that Smith does.' Marsh looked up weakly.
"Yes, sir," he said, and Pinckney clapped him on the back with real heartiness.

"Now, remember, Marsh, it means your fortune and your future. Be quiet."

When Marsh had gone Pinckney stood thoughtful for a moment. "What a pity he's such a weak fool," he muttered to himself. Then another glare of the furnaces as he passed. thought made him smile with more

satisfaction. "Perhaps it's just as well he is such a fool. I couldn't have got away with him so easy otherwise." Smith came lurching in a little fiercer than before, but Pinckney on occasion knew how to manage even Smith in his fiercest mood.

"See here," he exclaimed sharply, "that gun must go into the bath before Pinckuey took a telegram out of his 1 o'clock. No foolishness now! You'r fighting drunk, but I don't want anything out of you. Understand, you get that gun in before 1 o'clock if you're ever going to do any more

work around this place." Smith, drunk though he was, recog nized that now Pinckney was not the man to fool with.

"It's going in in fifteen migutes," he said.

"Let no one interfere with you, you

understand?" ordered the general man-The drunken foreman leered at him. "You saw what that fellow got that did interfere, didn't you? Well, they'll all get that if they fool with Smith."

Pinckney nodded acquiescence. "You're responsible. Remember, fif teen minutes, that's all." "I know my business," retorted the foreman. "I'll do the job," and be

lurched for the door as fast as he could go. Pinckney looked after him, with a

augh. "Well, when that fresh navy duck arrives he will find his gun in a thousand gallons of oil. I guess I fixed him He was turning away when the

street door opened, and Sommers, cool and collected as ever, lounged in." "Hello, Mr. Pinckney." He smiled at Pinckney's startled look. "Guess I'm a bit early. Didn't expect me so soon, did you? I'll just hang around here till my gun is taken

> CHAPTER IX. CAUGHT IN THE ACT.

out of the fire.'

OR ten minutes Pinckney, suppressing his anger and surprise, managed to talk casually in the office. Then he excused himself on the plea of work and, leaving Sommers, hurried out to see whether Smith had followed directions. "I'll be out in a few minutes myself," said Sommers as the general

of time, though."
"Oh, yes," Pinckney assured him from the door. "There's plenty of time. Don't hurry. We have our most responsible man in charge of the job." Out in the furnace room Pinckney found Smith moving about in leisurely

manager left. "Expect there is plenty

in the world ahead of him. "Have you taken out the Sommers gun yet?" demanded the general manager eagerly. Smith flared up.

fashion, as though he had all the time

"No. I can't do everything at once. What do you think I am? We'll get to it in a few minutes." "It's got to come out now," declared Pinckney angrily. "Sommers is here

in the office. He thinks we aren't able to run this job, and he's come to see his gun go into the bath" The drunken foreman's face convulsed with rage,

"Ob, he has, has he?" he yelled. "Well, if he comes bothering around To be Continued) me you know what he'll get? He'll

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